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(54) **Service gateway framework with expanded audio/video functionality**

(57) An AV bundle (39) comprising a set of AV services (40) is described, which can be integrated into existing service gateway architectures, and particularly into service gateway architectures according to the OSGi standard. By means of said AV services (40), it is possible to control AV devices of a local device network, e. g. a Home Network, via a service gateway architecture

(41). Starting from device-independent AV commands, said AV services generate instructions of a middleware protocol (43) required for controlling said AV devices in accordance with said device-independent AV commands. By using said AV services (40), it is possible to access the AV devices of said local device network without any knowledge of the underlying middleware protocol (43).

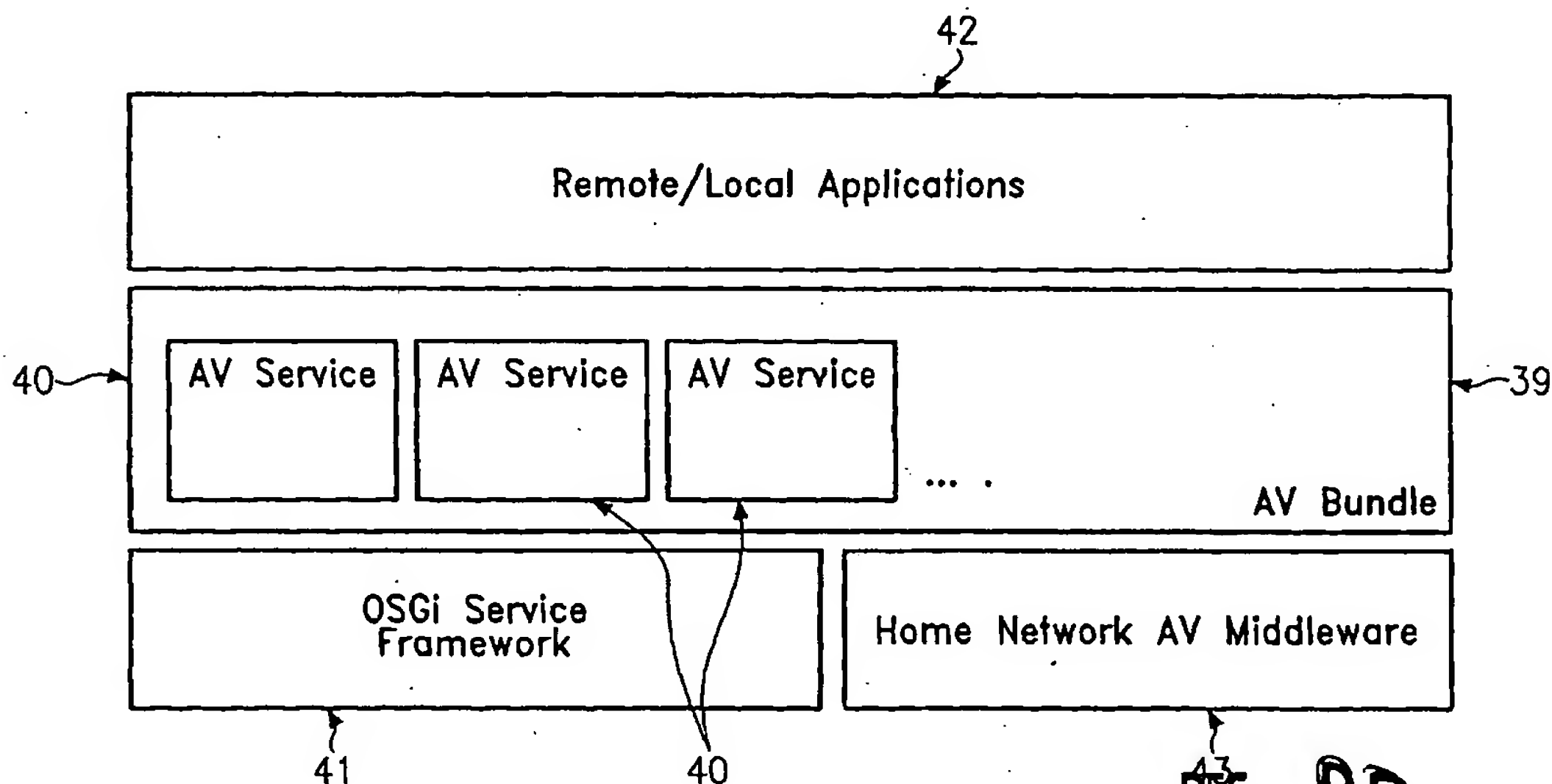


Fig.3

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Description

[0001] The present invention relates to an AV bundle for a service gateway framework, to a service gateway framework, particularly to a service gateway framework according to the OSGi (Open Services Gateway Initiative) standard, and to a method for controlling devices of a local device network, whereby said local device network is connected to a service gateway framework.

[0002] The current vision of a Home Network is a network comprised of AV devices like TVs, tuners, VCRs, and of IT devices like PCs, PDAs and mobile phones. (In the following specification, the term "AV" stands for "audio/video") To build up a network, all these devices can be interconnected via various media, like i.LINK, Ethernet, wireless, etc.

[0003] So far, a lot of effort has been made to develop Home Network middlewares that implement the basic functions of Home Network device control and computing. Examples are AV/C (Audio/Video Control), Jini, HAVi (Home Audio/Video interoperability), or UPnP (Unified Plug'n Play), wherein UPnP, AV/C, and HAVi provide a device-specific control.

[0004] AV/C (Audio/Video Control) is a common middleware standard for AV devices. The messages and instructions of the AV/C protocol are close to the machine level.

[0005] UPnP (Unified Plug'n Play) is a middleware standard for providing networking functionality to AV devices. Interfaces of AV devices are defined, and besides that, a low-level AV device management is possible.

[0006] HAVi (Home Audio/Video interoperability) is another middleware standard for accessing AV devices and for providing networking functionality. Different types of AV devices, the interface definitions of said AV devices and methods for handling said AV devices are specified.

[0007] Middleware provides APIs to access home network device's functionality and to control the exchange of contents data (e.g. content streaming). As mentioned above, these APIs are fine-grained and focused on devices.

[0008] Controlling AV devices within a home network and programming said devices is therefore a rather cumbersome task, because there are so many different middleware standards. In order to set up a data stream between AV devices that support different middleware standards, two different instruction sets have to be utilised.

[0009] In the European Patent Application 01 128 163 "Method for serving User Requests with respect to a Network of Devices", which has been filed by the applicant of the present application, it is described how a sequence of actions corresponding to a certain well-defined service can be generated. The complete disclosure of the European Patent Application 01 128 163 is herewith incorporated into this specification by reference.

[0010] A second approach is described in European Patent Application EP-A-02 007 765.7 "Management and control of networked audio-video devices", which has also been filed by the applicant of the present invention. According to this method, the task of mapping a user input to a sequence of middleware instructions is fulfilled by an instance of a functionality module, which is generated for this task only. The instance of said functionality module encapsulates the realization of a certain well-defined service and realizes this service autonomously. The lifetime of said instance is closely related to said task: As soon as the task is fulfilled, the lifetime of the respective instance is terminated. The complete disclosure of the European Patent Application EP-A-02 007 765.7 "Management and control of networked audio-video devices" is herewith incorporated into this specification by reference.

[0011] It is an object of the invention to provide a set of AV services and a method for controlling devices of a local device network, whereby the control of AV devices is simplified, and whereby a remote control of said AV devices is supported.

[0012] The object of the invention is solved by an AV bundle according to claim 1, by a service gateway framework according to claim 15, particularly a service gateway framework according to the OSGi standard, and by a method for controlling devices of a local device network according to claim 19. Preferred embodiments thereof are respectively defined in the respective following subclaims. A computer program product according to the present invention is defined in claim 23 and a computer readable record medium according to the present invention is defined in claim 24.

[0013] According to the invention, the AV bundle for a service gateway framework, in particular for a service gateway framework according to the OSGi standard, comprises a set of AV services, which are provided at local access points or, via broadband networks, at remote access points. Said AV services control devices of a local device network. Starting from device-independent AV commands, said AV services generate instructions of a middleware protocol required for controlling said devices in accordance with said device-independent AV commands.

[0014] Service gateway frameworks such as OSGi (Open Services Gateway Initiative) provide a platform for downloading service applications that obey to standards defined by OSGi. Said services do comprise applications for home networks, but they do not comprise services for handling AV devices yet.

[0015] According to the invention, an AV bundle comprising various AV services is integrated into a service gateway framework such as OSGi. By doing this, it is possible to access and program the AV devices of the home network via the internet, or via another broadband network. A remote control of said AV devices becomes possible.

[0016] Another advantage is that one unified platform,

particularly OSGi, can be used for accessing a variety of different services, whereby said AV services are only one service offer among other service offers. A common unified service platform allows to combine and interconnect different service offers, and the benefit for the client is improved. E.g., it is possible to access both the AV devices and the non-AV devices of a home network via OSGi. A unified remote control of all the electrical and electronic devices in a home becomes possible. Audio and video devices such as TVs, tuners, video recorders can be programmed, via the internet and the OSGi platform, from any remote access point, e.g. from a hotel room.

[0017] When the AV bundle according to the invention is used, it is not necessary to address the AV devices of a Home Network with complicated middleware instructions. The AV services according to the invention can be accessed with device-independent, simple commands, and therefore, the access to the AV devices is simplified both for users and for application programmers.

[0018] Middleware protocols such as AV/C, HAVi, which are rather fine-grained and cumbersome, are hidden both from the user and from the application programmer. Instructions of a very basic level are replaced by higher level device-independent commands. Thus, a more appropriate level of abstraction is provided.

[0019] Due to the variety of existing middleware standards, it is likely that within one home network, different middleware standards have to be used. When an audio/video stream has to be directed from an AV device with a first middleware standard to an AV device with a second middleware standard, the programming gets difficult. According to the invention, the AV commands that are provided to the AV services are always the same, and the respective AV service is responsible for mapping said AV commands to the right middleware protocol.

[0020] Therefore, the introduction of an AV bundle comprising a set of AV services allows to set up the interactions between different AV devices in a simplified and intuitive way.

[0021] According to a preferred embodiment of the invention, said AV services generate instances of one or more functionality modules, whereby said functionality modules encapsulate the realization of certain well-defined tasks corresponding to said device-independent AV commands, and whereby said instances generate said instructions of said middleware protocol for controlling said AV devices according to said device-independent AV commands. After a certain task is fulfilled and a sequence of middleware instructions has been generated, the instance can be removed. Therefore, there are less objects active at a time. Furthermore, by using this flexible approach of generating instances of said functionality modules when and where required, an efficient work load balancing can be implemented. Furthermore, the type of instance to be generated can be chosen in dependence of the middleware protocol required by the

AV device. To which an access is directed.

[0022] Preferably, said instances of a functionality module step through a life cycle, whereby said life cycle comprises the creation of said instance, a service operation, and the termination of said instance. Said instances exist only as long as they are needed. Furthermore, a one-to-one correspondence between a device-independent AV command and an instance of a functionality module may be established.

[0023] Preferably, said AV services comprise interfaces defining the routines and parameters of the respective AV service. Further preferably, said AV services are implemented as JAVA classes. JAVA provides the encapsulation features required for implementing the invention.

[0024] Preferably, said AV services control the exchange of data streams between said devices or between said devices and said broadband networks.

[0025] According to a preferred embodiment of the invention, said AV bundle comprises an AV service that provides those AV tracks that are stored at any device of said local device network. This allows to establish an archive functionality where all the AV tracks within a home network are registered and can be searched.

[0026] Preferably, said AV bundle comprises an AV service that provides those AV devices that are connected to said local device network.

[0027] Preferably, said AV bundle comprises an AV service that provides those broadcast services that are available within said local device network. Said broadcast service can be any received AV stream such as TV channels, radio stations, AV data streams from a broadband network, etc.

[0028] Further preferably, said AV bundle comprises an AV service that provides those broadcast service events that are available or will be available within said local device network. By means of this AV service, an Electronic Program Guide (EPG) can be realized, which informs the user about different broadcasts. Furthermore, the user can use advanced query tools for identifying the broadcasts he or she is interested in. Furthermore, the programming of recording devices is simplified.

[0029] According to a preferred embodiment of the invention, said AV bundle comprises a recording service that can be programmed to record a certain broadcast service event. Instead of programming a start time and an end time of a broadcast service event, content information is used for programming the recording devices.

[0030] Preferably, said recording service generates a new AV track by recording a scheduled broadcast service event. Said new AV track is named according to the broadcast service event and is put into the archive.

[0031] Preferably, said middleware protocols comprise at least one of the protocols HAVi, AV/C, UPnP.

[0032] Further preferably, said middleware protocols comprise at least one of the protocols Bluetooth, CAL, CEBus, Convergence, emNET, HomePNA, HomePlug,

HomeRF, Jini, LonWorks, 802.11B and VESA. AV contents are not only processed by AV devices. Personal computer, organisers, mobile phones and other IT devices can store and process AV contents as well.

[0033] According to the invention, a service gateway framework, particularly a service gateway framework according to the OSGi standard, comprises a set of services, which are provided at local access points or, via broadband networks, at remote access points. The service gateway device is characterized by an AV bundle according to any of the embodiments described above. The concept of a service gateway framework which brings together service providers and clients is strengthened by including AV services.

[0034] Preferably, said service gateway framework manages at least one of installation, versioning, configuration, deinstallation of said AV services. When new types of AV devices appear, corresponding AV services can be downloaded by the service gateway architecture. The service gateway framework keeps track of different versions.

[0035] Preferably, said AV services are accessed by local applications or, via broadband networks, by remote applications, whereby said local or remote applications forward device-independent AV commands to the respective AV services. The client doesn't have to be aware of the detailed specifications of his home network when issuing the respective commands.

[0036] Further preferably, said broadband networks comprise at least one of DSL, cable, wireless networks, or satellite. The service gateway architecture co-operates with all kinds of broadband networks.

[0037] According to the inventive method, devices of a local device network are controlled, whereby said local device network is connected to a service gateway framework, in particular to a service gateway framework according to the OSGi standard. Said service gateway framework provides a set of services. The inventive method is characterized by a step of forwarding device-independent AV commands to an AV bundle comprising a set of AV services, whereby said AV bundle is a part of said service gateway framework. Then, on part of said AV services, instructions of a middleware protocol required for controlling said AV devices in accordance with said device-independent AV commands are generated.

[0038] Further objects, features and advantages of the AV bundle according to the present invention will become apparent from the following description of an exemplary embodiment thereof taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, wherein

Fig. 1 gives an overview of a service gateway framework according to the OSGi standard;

Fig. 2 shows the various protocols used within the local network and within the wide area network;

Fig. 3 shows how the OSGi framework, the AV serv-

ices and the middleware co-operate; and

Fig. 4 shows a user interface of a home network application including an electronic program guide (EPG) and a record button.

[0039] In Fig. 1, it is shown how a services gateway 1 according to OSGi can provide a multitude of different services to a client. Some of these services relate to a local network 2 that is connected to the services gateway 1. Within the local network 2, which is typically some kind of a home network, several devices 3 exchange commands and messages. For this purpose, a local protocol is used within the local network 2.

[0040] The client 4 can access the services of the services gateway 1 via a wide area network 5, which can be the internet or the telecommunications infrastructure. The services accessed by the client 4 might e. g. include services for remotely controlling, e.g. via the internet, lighting, heating and ventilation devices that are connected to the home network. From any internet access point, the client 4 can log in, access the homepage of the services gateway, and control the devices 3 of the local network 2.

[0041] The client 4 may only use those services he or she is registered for. When the client 4 has registered for a certain service at the service provider 6, the software modules for implementing a certain service can be downloaded from the service provider 6 to the services gateway 1. Also new versions and updates of the respective service modules can be obtained from the service provider 6. The gateway operator 7 offers a service gateway access via any broadband networking technology. E.g. the gateway operator might be an internet provider offering websites for service gateway access.

[0042] In the lower part of Fig. 1, a magnified view 8 of the services gateway 1 is shown. Let us assume that a client 9 wants to control a device 10 of the corresponding home network, for example to adjust the heater's target temperature. The client 9 accesses a first service 11. The OSGi specifications delineate Application programming Interface (API) standards for a gateway platform execution environment. Service gateways must support these API standards in order to conform to the OSGi specification. In case said first service 11 has to exchange messages with a second service 12, this exchange of messages takes place via a standardized OSGi API 13. Also the exchange of messages and commands between the second service 12 and the device 10 takes place via a standardized OSGi API 14.

[0043] The services 11, 12 are part of an OSGi framework 15 that comprises a multitude of other services. Between said first service 11, said second service 12 and the OSGi framework 15, messages are exchanged via standardized APIs 16, 17. The OSGi framework 15 is connected to a service management system 18. Said service management system 18 is responsible for installation, configuration, updating and deinstallation of the

OSGi framework's services. Communication between the service management system 18 and the OSGi framework 15 takes place via a OSGi API 19.

[0044] Fig. 2 gives an overview of the various networking technologies that can be used together with a OSGi service gateway architecture. The OSGi specification is designed to compliment and enhance virtually all residential networking standards and initiatives. On part of the respective local network, networking standards such as HomePNA (20), HomePlug (21), HAVi (22), LonWorks (23), Bluetooth (24), 802.11 (25), CE-Bus (26), HomeRF (27), UPnP (28), JINI technology (29), and others (30) such as CAL, Convergence, emNET and VESA can co-operate with the OSGi framework 31.

[0045] The services that can be accessed via the OSGi framework are offered by respective service providers 32 and by content providers 33. Services and contents are provided via a broadband networking technology to the OSGi framework 31. In Fig. 2, several examples of broadband networking technologies such as cable (34), DSL (35), wireless networks (36), satellite (37), and others (38) are given. Via these networking technologies, managed broadband services can be delivered to local networks in homes, cars and other environments.

[0046] According to the invention, an AV bundle comprising a set of AV services is integrated into a service gateway framework, and in particular into a service gateway framework according to the OSGi standard. So far, an AV functionality has not been included within the OSGi framework. In Fig. 3, it is shown how the AV bundle 39, which comprises a multitude of AV services 40, can be integrated into the OSGi service framework 41. Whenever the local or remote applications 42 issue an AV command to the AV bundle 39, said AV command is processed by a respective AV service 40. The AV services 40 are responsible for mapping the device-independent AV commands to a corresponding sequence of instructions of the respective middleware 43. Middleware provides APIs to access home network device's functionality and to control the exchange of contents data (e.g. content streaming). These middleware APIs are rather fine-grained and focused on the respective AV device. Each of the common middleware protocols for AV applications requires a different sequence of instructions. By providing a "bundle" of frequently requested AV services on a more abstract, device-independent level, it becomes a lot easier for remote and local applications 42 to access the AV devices.

[0047] The task of generating the rather complicated instruction sequences of the so-called middleware 43 is shifted to said AV services 40. On part of the AV services 40, the structure of the Home Network and the respective types of AV devices are known. Additionally, the more abstract AV commands from the local and remote applications 42 are known on part of the AV services 40.

[0048] Basically, there are two possible solutions how

said middleware instructions can be generated. The first solution is described in European Patent Application 01 128 163 "Method for serving User Requests with respect to a Network of Devices", which has been filed by the applicant of the present application. In this application, it is described how a sequence of actions corresponding to a certain well-defined service can be generated. The complete disclosure of the European Patent Application 01 128 163 is herewith incorporated into this specification by reference.

[0049] A second approach is described in European Patent Application EP-A-02 007 765.7 "Management and control of networked audio-video devices", which has also been filed by the applicant of the present invention. According to this method, the task of mapping a user input to a sequence of middleware instructions is fulfilled by an instance of a functionality module, which is generated for this task only. The instance of said functionality module encapsulates the realization of a certain well-defined service and realizes this service autonomously. The lifetime of said instance is closely related to said task: As soon as the task is fulfilled, the lifetime of the respective instance is terminated. The complete disclosure of the European Patent Application EP-A-02 007 765.7 "Management and control of networked audio-video devices" is herewith incorporated into this specification by reference.

[0050] In the following, some of the AV services of the AV bundle according to the invention will be explained in more detail.

[0051] **ArchiveService** is an AV service that provides a list of all stored AV tracks, together with the status of the respective AV track. **ArchiveService** searches for all AV devices that can store content (tape-based recorders, disc-based devices) and asks them for their contents. In case a track is deleted, in case a certain device is removed from the network, or in case a new track is recorded, **ArchiveService** is notified and changes the list of stored track names accordingly. In case the status of a track is changed, the service **ArchiveService** receives a notification and changes the track list accordingly. Whenever any modification to the track list has been made, **ArchiveService** sends an event to all registered listeners in order to inform them about the change.

[0052] The method `trackList` returns the archive, which is a list of the stored track-names and their status. The method `eraseTrack` erases a track from the archive.

[0053] AV devices within the local network can be registered as **ArchiveServiceListeners**. As soon as a certain device is registered as an **ArchiveServiceListener**, it will be called whenever the status for a track changes or whenever a track will be deleted or a new track will be recorded. In order to register, the method `registerArchiveServiceListener` can be called. Correspondingly, there exists a method `unregisterArchiveServiceListener`.

[0054] In addition to the service **ArchiveService**, a

corresponding service **ArchiveServiceListener** is defined. Within **ArchiveServiceListener**, the methods **archiveChanged** and **stateChanged** exist. The method **archiveChanged** will be called whenever a track is deleted or a new track will be recorded. The method **stateChanged** will be called whenever a state for a track changes.

[0055] Another AV service is **DeviceListService**, which maintains a list of the devices that are connected to the local network, together with their status. In case a device will be removed from the network, or in case a device changes its status, **DeviceListService** will receive a notification. Whenever the list of devices is changed, **DeviceListService** sends an event to all registered **DeviceListServiceListeners**.

[0056] **DeviceListService** comprises a method **deviceList**, which returns the list of connected devices, or null if an error occurs. Furthermore, a method **registerDeviceListServiceListener** for registering a listener is defined. Correspondingly, there is a method called **unregisterDeviceListServiceListener**.

[0057] In addition to the AV service **DeviceListService**, a corresponding AV service **DeviceListServiceListener** is defined. This service provides the method **deviceListChanged**, which will be called whenever the device list changes. Whenever a new device is connected to the local network, the method **deviceListChanged** will be called.

[0058] **ServiceListService** is an AV service that maintains a list of available broadcast services, characterised by their names, and the status of each broadcast service. A "Broadcast services" may for example be a radio or TV station, e. g. "NBC". The term "broadcast service" also comprises AV data streams received via the internet or via another broadband network. The complete list of available broadcast services within the Home Network is obtained by calling the method **serviceList**. In case the Home Network comprises several tuners that receive the same program, the list of broadcast services returned by the method **serviceList** contains the name of said program only once, because duplicates are automatically removed.

[0059] Whenever the list of broadcast services is changed, **ServiceListService** sends an event to all registered **ServiceListServiceListeners**. **ServiceListService** comprises a method **registerServiceListServiceListener** that allows to register a new listener. Said listener will be notified whenever the list of broadcast services changes. Furthermore, **ServiceListService** comprises a method **unregisterServiceListServiceListener**.

[0060] **ServiceListServiceListener** is the AV service that corresponds to **ServiceListService** on part of the listener. **ServiceListServiceListener** comprises a method **serviceListChanged**, and said method is called whenever the list of broadcast services changes.

[0061] For each broadcast service, so-called "service events" are defined, which characterise a certain broadcast, e.g. a game show, a certain movie, etc. Said serv-

ice events are tracked by the AV service **ServiceEventListService**. On part of **ServiceEventListService**, it is known whether a service is selected and if a recording is going on.

5 [0062] **ServiceEventListService** comprises a method **currentEvent**, which returns the current event for a certain broadcast service or null if an error occurs. Similarly, the method **nextEvent** returns the next event for a certain broadcast service. By means of the method **ServiceEventList**, the current and next events for all the available broadcast services can be obtained. The method **todayServiceEventList** returns the events of the current day for a given broadcast service or null if an error occurs.

10 [0063] **ServiceEventListService** permits to notify registered listeners whenever the content of the list of broadcast service events changes. For this purpose, **ServiceEventListService** comprises the method **registerServiceEventListServiceListener**, and the corresponding method **unregisterServiceEventListServiceListener**. Besides that, there is a corresponding AV service called **ServiceEventListServiceListener**, in which the method **serviceEventListChanged** is defined.

15 [0064] The most important AV service of the AV bundle according to the invention is **RecordingService**. By means of the AV service **RecordingService**, it is possible to record a specified broadcast service from its start time to its end time, whereby details concerning the control of the respectively involved AV devices are hidden from the user. The user only has to call the method **schedule** and specify the broadcast service and the broadcast service event that he wants to record, e.g. a certain movie. After calling **schedule**, **RecordingService** starts fulfilling its objective and runs through a corresponding sequence of operations. First, the record service waits until the start time is reached. If it is already reached or even elapsed, recording is started immediately. Then, **RecordingService** looks for a tuner that provides the specified broadcast service. Next, it looks for a suitable recording device, which can be a hard disc, a tape recorder or another kind of storage medium. The streams between the involved AV devices are set up, and on part of the tuner, the broadcast service is selected. Then, the recording is started on the recording device and the new track that has been created is named to **event_name**. Until the end time is reached, **RecordingService** observes the involved devices. Then, the recording device is stopped, and finally, the devices are disconnected. The new track that is generated during the recording is forwarded to **ArchiveService**.

20 [0065] Furthermore, **RecordingService** comprises a method **state**, which returns the current status for a certain schedule. Each schedule can be identified by means of a unique ID. By calling the method **cancel**, it is possible to stop a recording before the end time is reached. The track that has been created for the recording will be deleted, though. By calling the method **stop** before the end time is reached, the user can keep the

AV track that has been generated so far during the recording.

[0066] Again, it is possible to register and unregister a listener. In case of any schedule changes, *RecordingService* notifies all the registered listeners.

[0067] The interplay between the AV service *RecordingService* and the AV service *ServiceEventListService* is an important aspect of the AV bundle according to the invention. If the user wants to record a broadcast service event, all he or she has to do is to specify the name of the broadcast service event. *ServiceEventListService* will provide the respective start time and end time of the broadcast service event to *RecordingService*. It is also possible to implement an Electronic Program Guide (EPG) as shown in Fig. 4. By clicking on the record button, it is possible to record a selected broadcast service event. Especially for a remote control of AV devices, e.g. via the internet, it is advantageous to use an Electronic Program Guide.

Claims

1. AV bundle (39) for a service gateway framework, in particular for a service gateway framework (41) according to the OSGi standard, **characterized by**

- a set of AV services (40), which are provided at local access points or, via broadband networks, to remote access points, whereby said AV services (40) control devices (3) of a local device network (2),
- whereby said AV services (40) generate, starting from device-independent AV commands, instructions of a middleware protocol (43) required for controlling said devices in accordance with said device-independent AV commands.

2. AV bundle according to claim 1, **characterized in that** said AV services generate instances of one or more functionality modules, whereby said functionality modules encapsulate the realization of certain well-defined tasks corresponding to said device-independent AV commands, and whereby said instances generate said instructions of said middleware protocol for controlling said AV devices according to said device-independent AV commands.

3. AV bundle according to claim 2, **characterized in that** said instances of a functionality module step through a life cycle, whereby said life cycle comprises the creation of said instance, a service operation, and the termination of said instance.

4. AV bundle according to anyone of claims 1 to 3, **characterized in that** said AV services comprise interfaces defining the routines and parameters of

the respective AV service.

5. AV bundle according to anyone of claims 1 to 4, **characterized in that** said AV services are implemented as JAVA classes.
6. AV bundle according to anyone of claims 1 to 5, **characterized in that** said AV services control the exchange of data streams between said devices or between said devices and said broadband networks.
7. AV bundle according to anyone of claims 1 to 6, **characterized in that** said AV bundle comprises an AV service that provides those AV tracks that are stored at any device of said local device network.
8. AV bundle according to anyone of claims 1 to 7, **characterized in that** said AV bundle comprises an AV service that provides those AV devices that are connected to said local device network.
9. AV bundle according to anyone of claims 1 to 8, **characterized in that** said AV bundle comprises an AV service that provides those broadcast services that are available within said local device network.
10. AV bundle according to anyone of claims 1 to 9, **characterized in that** said AV bundle comprises an AV service that provides those broadcast service events that are available or will be available within said local device network.
11. AV bundle according to anyone of claims 1 to 10, **characterized in that** said AV bundle comprises a recording service that can be programmed to record a certain broadcast service event.
12. AV bundle according to claim 11, **characterized in that** said recording service generates a new AV track by recording a scheduled broadcast service event.
13. AV bundle according to anyone of claims 1 to 12, **characterized in that** said middleware protocols comprise at least one of the protocols HAVi, AV/C, UPnP.
14. AV bundle according to anyone of claims 1 to 13, **characterized in that** said middleware protocols comprise at least one of the protocols Bluetooth, CAL, CEBus, Convergence, emNET, HomePNA, HomePlug, HomeRF, Jini, LonWorks, 802.11B and VESA.
15. Service gateway framework, particularly a service gateway framework (41) according to the OSGi standard, comprising

- a set of services, which are provided at local access points or, via broadband networks, to remote access points,

characterized by

- an AV bundle (39) according to anyone of claims 1 to 14.

16. Service gateway framework according to claim 15, **characterized in that** said service gateway framework manages at least one of installation, versioning, configuration, deinstallation of said AV services,

17. Service gateway framework according to claim 15 or 16, **characterized in that** said AV services are accessed by local applications or, via broadband networks, by remote applications, whereby said local or remote applications forward device-independent AV commands to the respective AV services.

18. Service gateway framework according to anyone of claims 15 to 17, **characterized in that** said broadband networks comprise at least one of DSL, cable, wireless networks, or satellite.

19. Method for controlling devices of a local device network, said local device network being connected to a service gateway framework, in particular to a service gateway framework (41) according to the OSGi standard, with said service gateway framework providing a set of services, **characterized by** the following steps:

- forwarding device-independent AV commands to an AV bundle (39) comprising a set of AV services (40), with said AV bundle (39) being a part of said service gateway framework (41),
- generating, on part of said AV services (40), instructions of a middleware protocol (43) required for controlling said AV devices (40) in accordance with said device-independent AV commands.

20. Method for controlling devices of a local device network according to claim 19, **characterized by** generating instances of one or more functionality modules, whereby said functionality modules encapsulate the realization of certain well-defined tasks corresponding to said device-independent AV commands, and whereby said instances generate said instruction of said middleware protocol for controlling said AV devices according to said device-independent AV commands.

21. Method for controlling devices of a local device net-

work according to claim 19 or 20, **characterized by** generating an instance of a functionality module, starting and terminating the operation of said instance, and removing the instance of said functionality module.

22. Method for controlling devices of a local device network according to anyone of claims 19 to 21, **characterized by** accessing said AV services by local applications or, via broadband networks, by remote applications, whereby said local or remote applications forward device-independent AV commands to the respective AV services.

23. Computer program product, comprising computer program means adapted to embody the AV bundle as defined in anyone of claims 1 to 14, to embody the service gateway framework as defined in anyone of claims 15 to 18, or to perform the method steps as defined in anyone of claims 19 to 22 when being executed on a computer, digital signal processor or the like.

24. Computer readable record medium, storing thereon a computer program product according to claim 23.

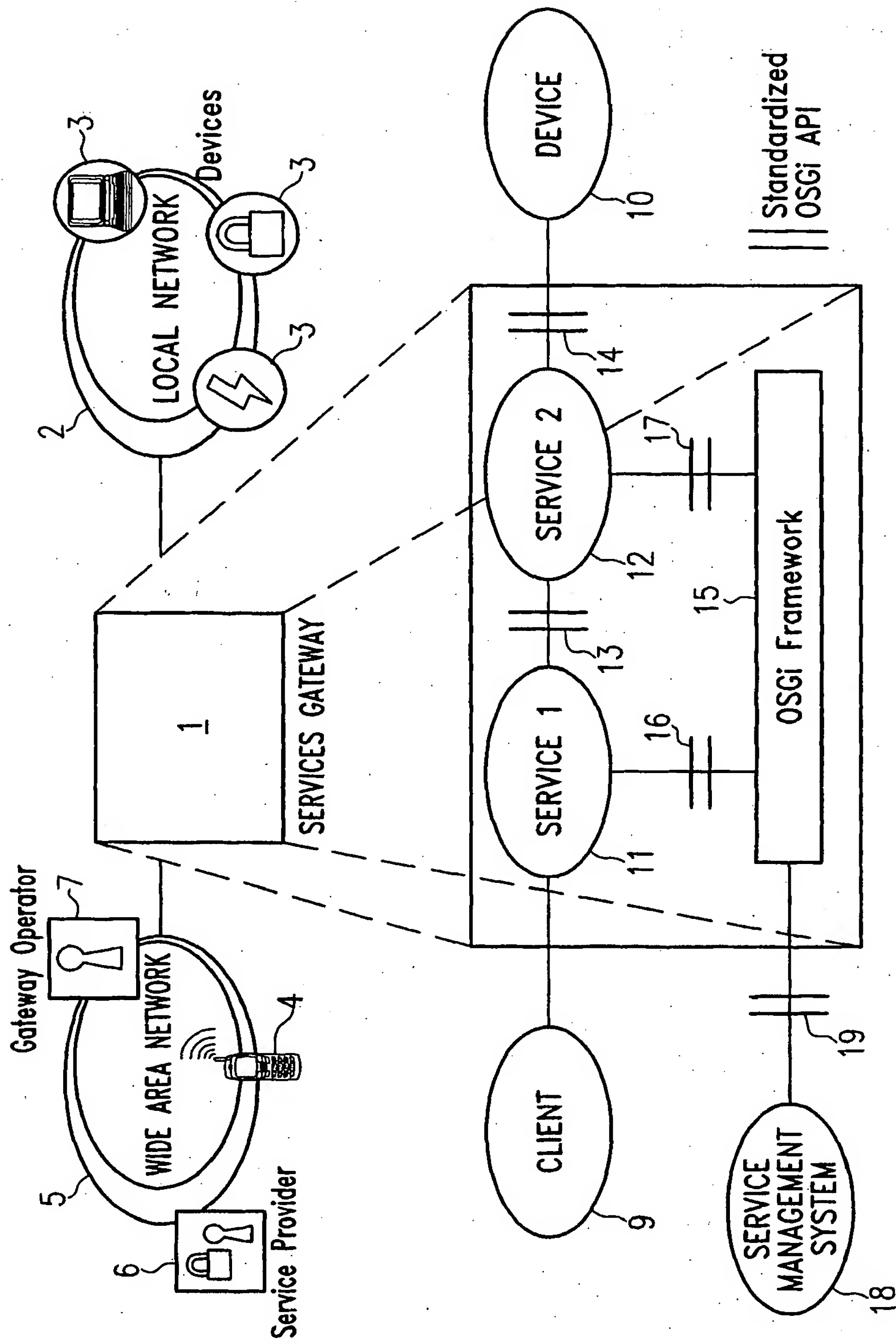


Fig. 1
(Prior Art)

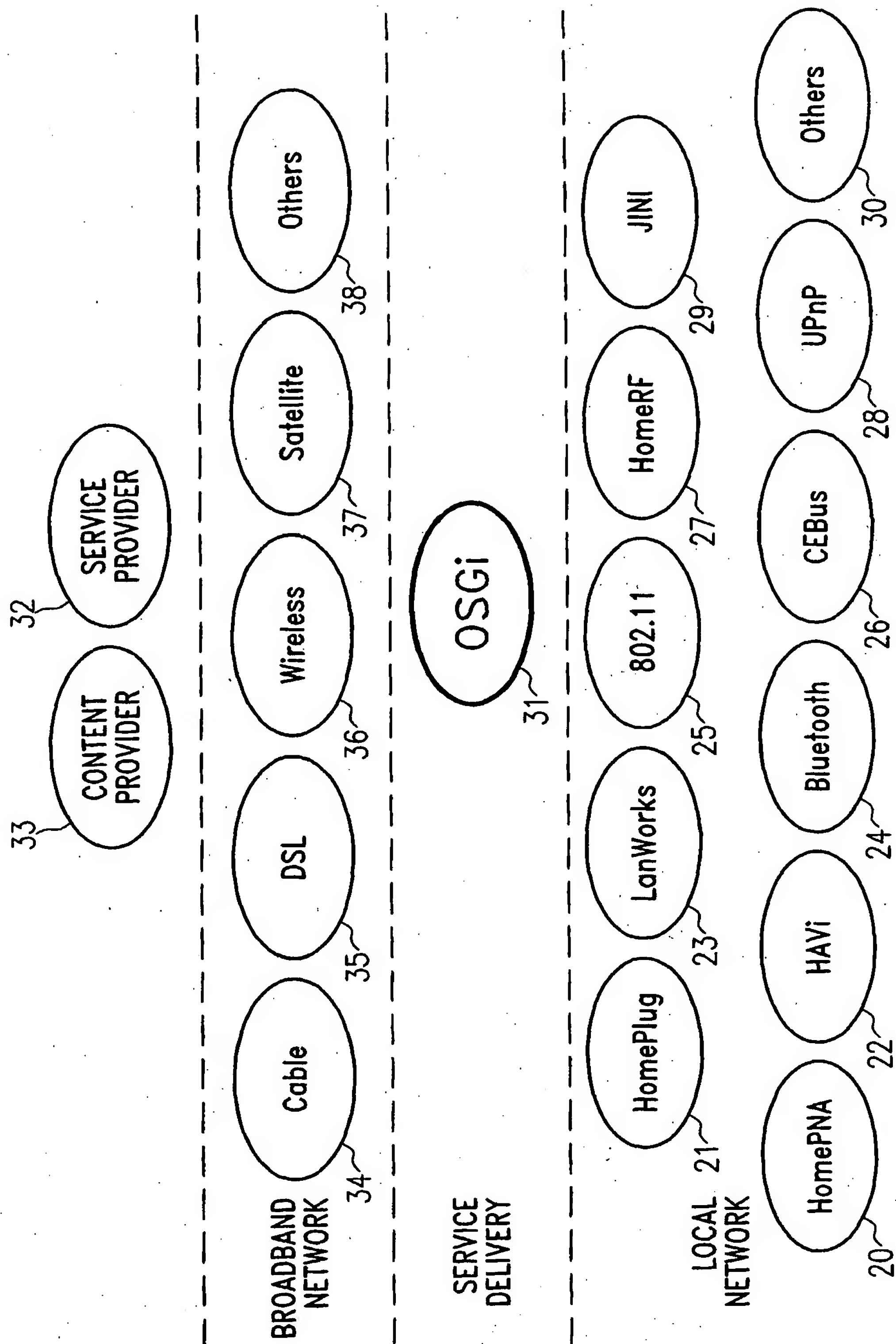


Fig. 2
(Prior Art)

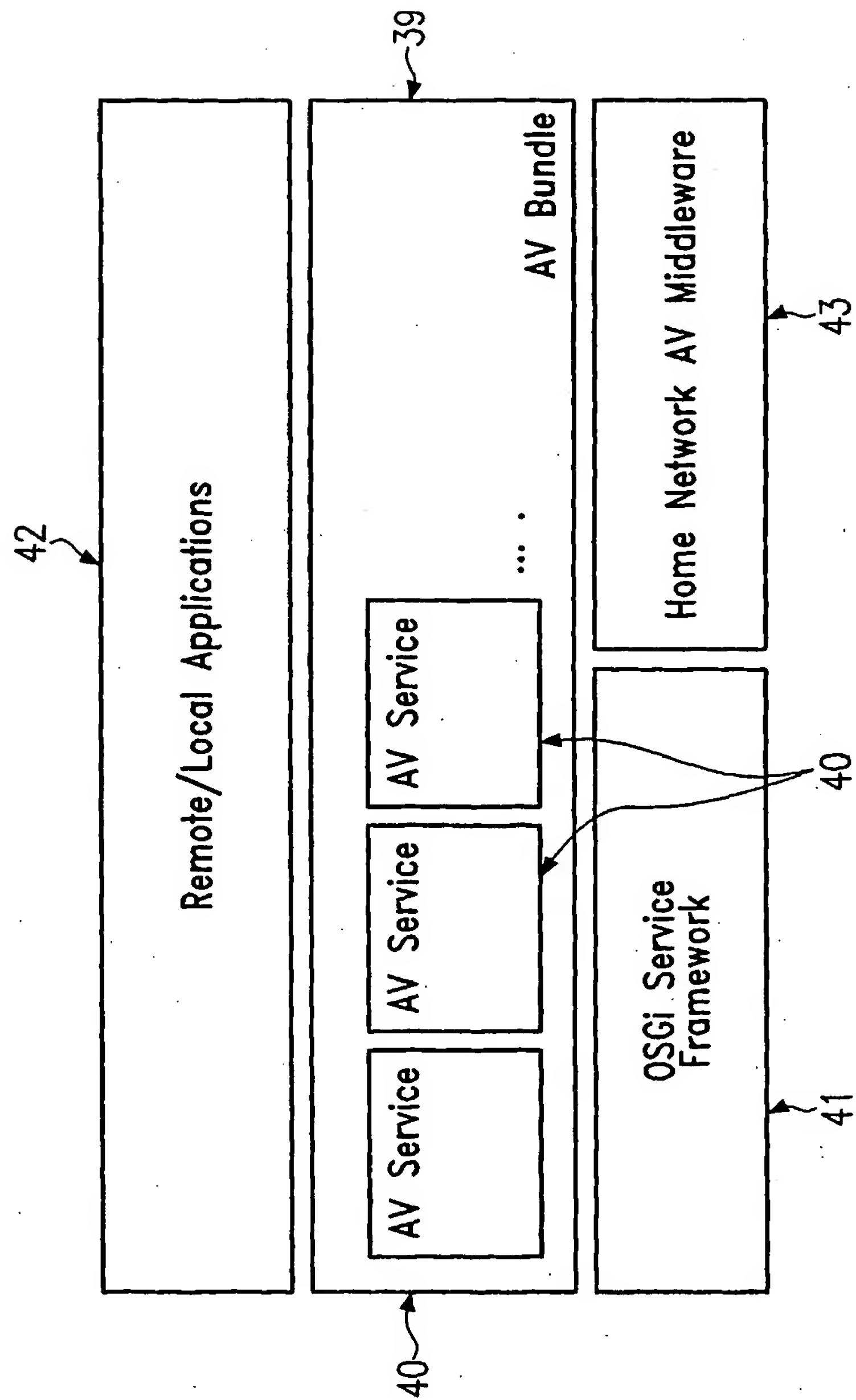


Fig.3

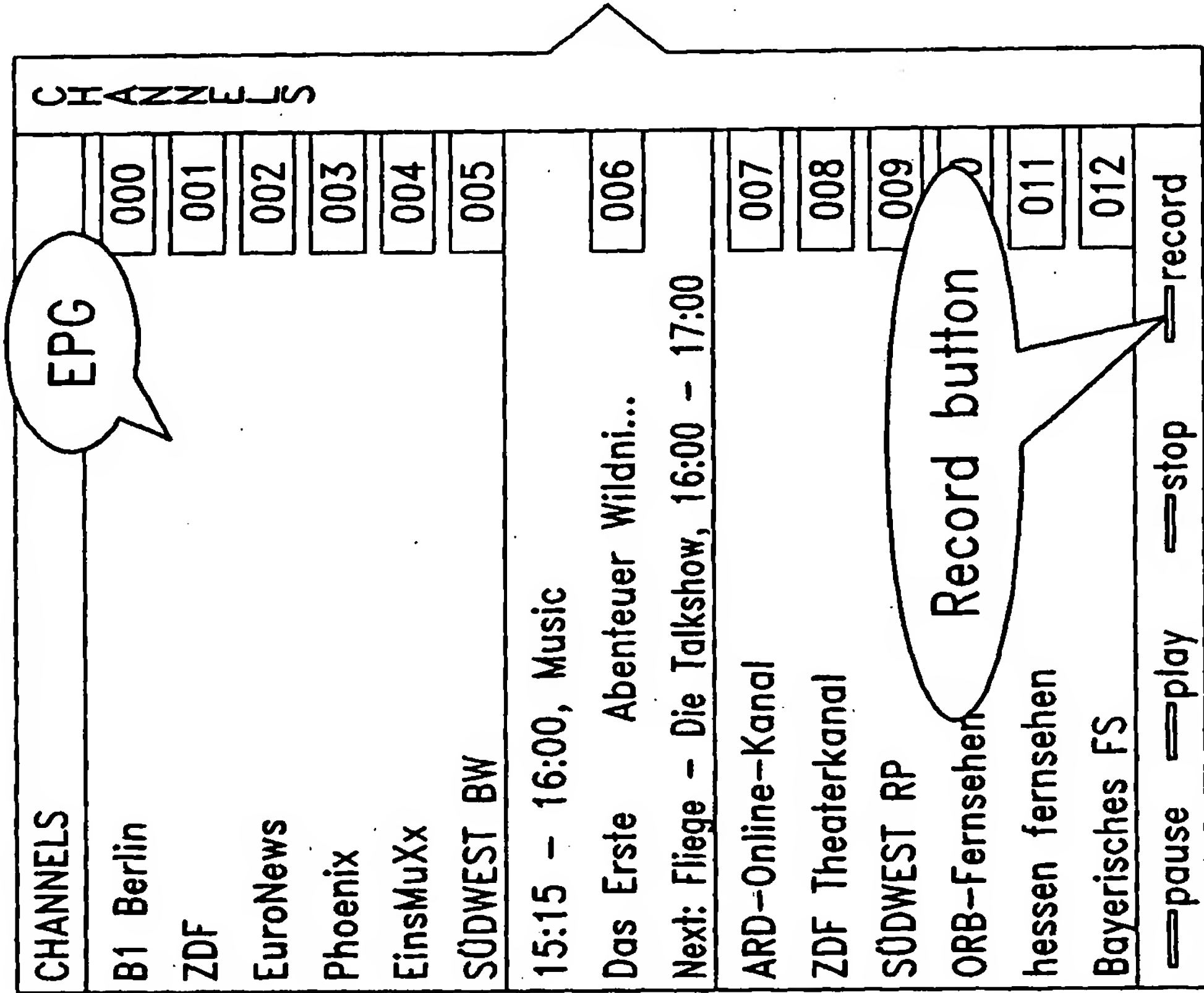


Fig.4



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Place of search MUNICH		Date of completion of the search 14 January 2003	Examiner Losseau, D
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